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James Bowen Johnson.

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OCTOBER 14, 1830.

JANUARY 10, 1899.

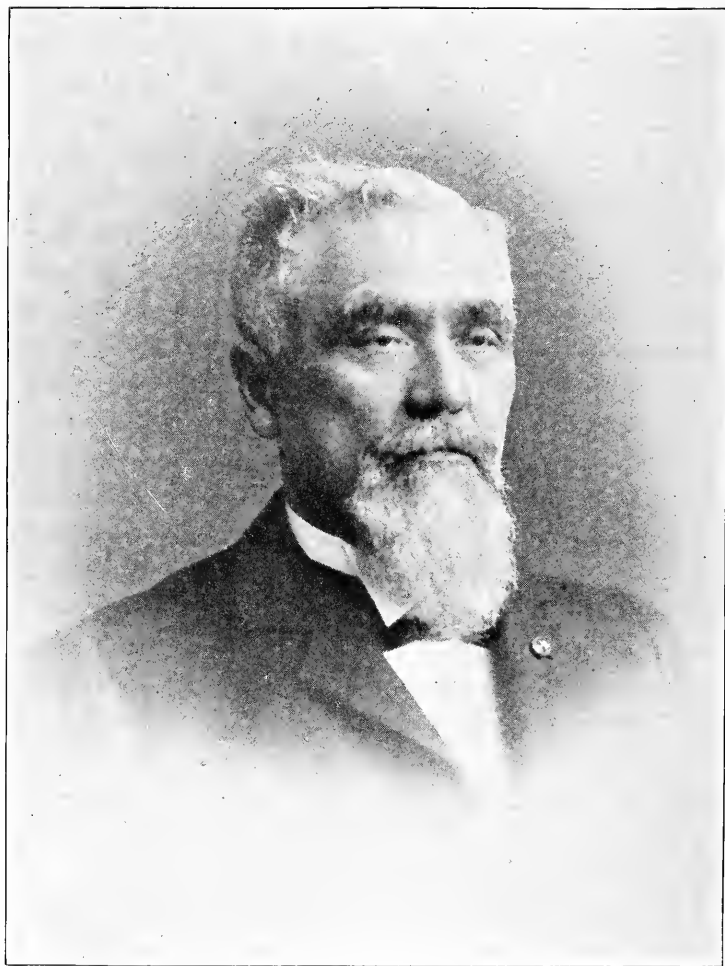
THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

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James Bowen Johnson.

From the Johnson Memorial.

James Bowen Johnson, of Washington, D. C., was born in the town of Royal Oak, Mich., Oct. 14, 1830. He attended school a part of the year, helping his father at home the remaining time, until he was eighteen years of age when, for five years, he taught school a part of the time. He was married to Louisa E. Williams, of Grand Blanc, Mich., Sept. 20, 1854. In 1856 he purchased a country store in his native town which he managed successfully until Aug., 1861, when he enlisted in the 3d Mich. Cavalry as a private soldier. He served in Missouri, Kentucky, and Tennessee; was in the campaign of New Madrid and Island No. 10; the siege of Corinth and the Mississippi campaign; was promoted to 1st Lieut., April 1, 1862; Regimental Commissary, Nov., 1862. He was commissioned Captain in the 8th Mich. Cavalry in Dec., 1862, but owing to severe illness could not accept it, and in the following January was honorably discharged.

In March, 1862, he visited Washington for a few days, and found a demand for one hundred clerks in the War Department and was appointed to a first-class clerkship. He was promoted one grade annually for three successive years.

During his residence in Washington, from 1863 to 1868 he took an active interest in promoting the cause of education among the freed people, organizing night schools and Sunday schools; was one of

fifteen government clerks who organized not less than a dozen night schools which, within one year, were taken up by teachers sent from the northern Freedmen's Relief Association and became regular day schools, and later when colored schools were established by law, were incorporated into the public school system of the District of Columbia. Resigning in 1868, he returned to Royal Oak, Mich., and re-established himself in trade, where he left it in 1861. After a brief illness in February, 1872, his wife died, and in April following, his father passed away. In July of the same year he received notice of his election to the position of treasurer of Howard University, at Washington, D. C., an institution which he helped to organize in 1866 and 1867. Accepting that important office, he found it had a debt of more than \$100,000, but by his judicious management, under the Board of Trustees, the institution was free from debt in 1878, and is so at the present time.

In May, 1873, he was married to Emma L. Crane of Bridport, Vt. They have two children, a son and a daughter. In 1874 he was elected Secretary of the University and one year later was assigned to the additional duty of charge of buildings and grounds. He thus continued as business manager, under the general direction of the Executive Committee and Board of Trustees, until his death. He was a member of the Grand Army of the Republic; the Military Order of the Loyal Legion; the Sons of the American Revolution; the Society of Colonial Wars; the Mayflower Society, the Washington branch of which he helped organize in 1898. He was also a member of the American Historical Association and the National Geographic Society. The First Congregational Church, of which he was a member, and one of the organizers in 1865, has more than one thousand members. He has been honored by it in his election to the office of deacon from 1876 to 1893, and again in 1895 for three

years; again for three years in 1898. He has also been a trustee of the church. He was elected president of the First Congregational Society in 1895 and reelected each year since. He was superintendent of one of its mission schools, having from nine hundred to one thousand scholars for five years, declining a further reelection on account of his health.

MEMORIAL SERVICE AND INTERMENT.

The memorial service was held in the First Congregational Church, Washington, D. C., January 13, 1899, at 2 p. m. The following hymns were rendered by Dr. and Mrs. Bischoff, assisted by the church quartette. The Scripture, read by the pastor, consisted of Psalm xxiii ; Romans viii : 18-end ; John iv : 1-16.

The interment took place in Rock Creek Cemetery, Washington, D. C.

NOT HALF HAS EVER BEEN TOLD.

I have read of a beautiful city,
Far away in the kingdom of God ;
I have read how its walls are of jasper,
How its streets are all golden and broad.
In the midst of the street is life's river,
Clear as crystal and pure to behold,
But not half of that city's bright glory
To mortals has ever been told.

CHORUS.

Not half has ever been told,
Not half has ever been told—
Not half of that city's bright glory,
To mortals has ever been told.

I have read of bright mansions in heaven,
Which the Saviour has gone to prepare ;
And the saints who on earth have been faithful
Rest forever with Christ over there;
There no sin ever enters, nor sorrow,
The inhabitants never grow old;
But not half of the joy that awaits them
To mortals has ever been told.

REMARKS OF REV. J. E. RANKIN, D. D., LL. D., PRESIDENT
HOWARD UNIVERSITY.

MATTHEW xxv : 23. "His lord said unto him : Well done, good and faithful servant ; thou hast been faithful over a few things, enter thou into the joy of thy lord."

Fidelity is often treated by men as though it were a cheap virtue. It is not so treated in the Bible ; by the Judge of all the earth. There are virtues more striking and brilliant. The Saviour says, "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible to you." Here is Moses smiting the Red Sea, and dividing the waters, so that God's people go through on dry land; smiting the rock in the wilderness, and the waters gush out; always endowed by supernatural forces, and ready for supernatural ministrations.

But God does not say, "Have ye considered my servant Moses?" but, "Have ye considered my servant Job?" Job was not working wonders. He was tending his seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she-asses, and a very great household. He was rising up early in the morning and sanctifying his children, saying, "It may be they have sinned and cursed God in their hearts." Thus did Job continually; or all the days, as it is in the margin. The very embodiment and picture of fidelity to a great trust; growing great in the land, un-

der the law, "To him that hath, shall be given, and he shall have more abundance."

Indeed, when God speaks of Himself, in His relation to His creatures, the epithet He uses is the the word faithful. If there is anything that a man requires in his God, it is fidelity. "Wherefore, let him that suffereth according to the will of God, commit the keeping of his soul to Him in well-doing, as to a faithful Creator." If God puts a man in the furnace he will not overheat it. Thus God puts Himself under moral obligations to His creatures, and is faithful to these obligations. A faithful Creator is one who does not disappoint; who when He is wanted, is there; to counsel, to help, to deliver. He the Infinite, faithful to the finite. This is the line of argument which David employed with King Saul respecting himself, when he went out to confront the Philistine. He had been a kind of a rough-rider in his day: he had kept the flocks of his father among the wild beasts, on the Bethlehem sheep-ranches. This is his argument: "The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, He will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine." There is something beautiful to me, in the kind of abandon with which a young man throws himself into perils, trusting in God. He believes in God, as a faithful Creator, and it is not irreverent to say, God believes in him. God knows how to use him; God means to use him; created him for his uses. What a thought! Fidelity to God is an adjustment of ourselves to God's environment for us; not merely to our situation, but to the living force there. There are men who have been delivered out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, who, as soon as the Philistine heaves in sight, as soon as this gigantic bulk uplifts itself, standing eleven feet and a half, with his helmet of brass, and his coat of mail, and his spear-head weighing six hundred shekels, think that God

is going to desert them; is not a faithful Creator at all; will do for small emergencies, but not for large ones. And they begin to shiver and prevaricate and go all to pieces. When the sentence comes, "Well done, good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things," we see it mentions proportions indeed, but it is really dependent upon a single quality, fidelity. Few things have been exchanged for many things. But, the word faithful remains unchanged. First, the lion and the bear; that is, few things. Then, the Philistine giant and the fleeing army, and the exultant cry, "Saul has slain his thousands, but David his ten thousands;" that is, many things. Even in this life the principle is illustrated.

If I were to mention the prominent characteristic of James Bowen Johnson, whose pastor I was for twelve years, and who has been for over a quarter of a century the treasurer of Howard University, I should pronounce it fidelity. If he had anything to do he would see it done; today, and not tomorrow—continually, all the days, as said of Job. Many is the time that after his day's work has been finished in his office, said one of his household, he has thought of something that would be misunderstood if left as it was, and he has returned to set it exactly right. "And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch." When last September the Government official looked over his books he pronounced them exactly right. He had no suggestions. His business accounts always balanced. If Mr. Johnson had been told last Tuesday night when, after a meeting of the Executive Committee, for the last time he sprung the bolt to his safe, that before the next morning God's Inspecting Angel would come to his office and look over his accounts, I do not believe he would have turned back to revise them at all. He was ready to give account of his stewardship. He had often heard the echoing footsteps

of the Silent Angel. Perhaps his cup of happiness had never been so full. He had just received testimony of the high standing of his son at the University. Born in Michigan when it was still a territory ; a school teacher from 18 to 23 years of age ; a country store-keeper for five years ; incidentally town clerk, justice of the peace, and postmaster under Lincoln ; he entered the army as a private in 1861, and served until he was made captain in the 8th Michigan Cavalry ; a clerk in the War Department from 1863 to 1868, rising one grade annually for three successive years ; five years, nights and Sundays, especially devoting himself to Sunday schools and night schools among the freedmen here ; taking the office of treasurer of Howard University in 1873, when the institution was \$100,000 in debt, and under the supervision of the executive officers managing its financial affairs as in the eye of the great Taskmaster, he has now surrendered his stewardship to a faithful Creator. He has finished the work God gave him to do. We see that God gave him his work. We may well say, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Mr. Johnson took great pride in his kinship to the little company who landed on Plymouth Rock in 1620. Forefathers' Day was his favorite anniversary. Two of his ancestors were there. If he, in some good degree, caught as the keynote of his life the spirit of that event ; if he tried to be baptized as they were, unto his Master in the cloud and in the sea ; to drink of that spiritual Rock that followed them ; if he copied their sometimes severe fidelity, their rigid exactness, it was his inheritance from the noblest one hundred the earth ever produced. As a lineal descendant from their loins, it was fitting that he should be among the first in every forward movement, civil and ecclesiastical ; that he should keep time to the note of the trumpet when God was marching on ; should enlist as a private in 1861 ; should be among the founders of this church in 1865 ; should

be one of the charter members establishing Howard University in 1866-'67 ; should select for his own the Bowen family motto of six centuries, "Courage, Virtue, Charity." Like his father, who emigrated from Vermont to Michigan in 1826, he went West "looking land." His face was always toward the Occident. That he passed away without tasting the bitterness of death, as he had lately expressed the hope, after the death of a fellow-deacon, that he might do ; that he builded on the old foundations ; that he taught his children to reverence a noble ancestry and to follow the old paths, we cannot be too grateful today. Everywhere where fidelity is needful—in family, in church, in business—we shall miss him ; a man sturdy in principle, with the granite of Plymouth Rock in his veins, who could neither be tempted nor corrupted ; and to whom we may humbly trust this sentence of approval has been uttered by the Great Judge, "Well done, good and faithful servant. Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things."

I thought I was done. I have one word more. Here was a man standing in the seventh generation after John Alden and Priscilla Mullens of the Mayflower company. He shows that their descendants are still landing here. He takes up their work. It was in his blood. He could not do otherwise. For seven generations God has made true in this man's line the words of the poet Emerson :

Spring still makes Spring in the mind,
When sixty years are told,
Love wakes anew the throbbing heart,
And we are never old.
Over the winter glaciers
I see the summer glow,
And through the wind-piled snowdrift,
The warm rosebuds below.

It will be so forever. Instead of the fathers shall be the children. Though Heaven and earth pass away, he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.

CROSSING THE BAR.

Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea,
But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark !
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark ;
For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crost the bar.

REMARKS OF REV. S. M. NEWMAN, D. D., PASTOR FIRST
CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

The richness of manhood is an amazing thing. One who studies it on its best sides and discriminates with regard to very much which is called common, is amazed at the results which are reached with a comparatively limited range of qualities. God puts into the human race certain elementary qualities. Fidelity has already been spoken of. Many others are included, such as truthfulness and graciousness, but all kinds of qualities can be summed up under a very limited list. It would be expected on the part of a crude observer or a hasty judge that the results reached in the formation of character with such a small number of essential qualities would be very monotonous, and that from year to year and from decade to decade as we lay aside our friends we should simply repeat over one the analysis which had been made for another. But lo and behold, in the case of every noble spirit, every searcher after truth, something new must be said, something totally different from that which has been said about anybody else, and while the words we use are the same they must be put together very differently. What is the cause of this? The cause of it is that precious gift, individuality. When God has put these qualities—summed up, as I have said, in a comparatively limited list by the unities of virtue—before us for search he says to each one of us, “Take those qualities and work them out after your own pattern. Live them as you see them, apply them to your range of duties, make your life great by these things but act your own

part. Don't copy." And so it comes to pass that while we find many persons in all ages whose hearts are virtuous and devout, their lives are wonderfully different from each other. The Galahads of the world, whose strength is as the strength of ten, because their hearts are pure, the Arthurs of kindly service, are not all alike. In every kind of heroism there is an individuality that makes a special character for each individual hero. This gives a zest to life. It ought to bring the impulse to every heart to make life individual, crown it with that which God wishes to see in it—individuality.

You see at once that if to be ourselves be our difficulty then there is a very precious ambition bestowed upon us. With all the world before us we are to enter into it with this definite embassy, this aim to be ourselves and act our part, not copying other people. While this is true we must beware of the opposite danger. We must all the time beware of the danger of becoming so individual as to be obstructive, not open to reason, not listening to argument, not taking anything into our lives which is seemingly opposed to a pre-formed opinion of our own. In between the weakness which does nothing in the world and this obstructive personality, is the range of beautiful manhood.

Now the brother whose tabernacle of the flesh lies before us today was a man of singular individuality, unlike anybody else. He took the qualities which God placed before him in his youthful years and wrought them into his character, into his daily duties, into his tasks, and made himself an individual, a unique personality. He wrought truthfulness into it. He wrought obedience to rules into it. He could not bear any careless violation of right rules and sensible ways. It fretted him. He was working obedience and truthfulness into his own character and becoming more and more individual in every way so that this personality became in him the source of his usefulness.

I do not believe anybody ever mistook the kind of a man he was. Open and constant exposure of his underlying principles characterized him so that at any moment when you disagreed with him you did not doubt what kind of a man he was, for he made it too plain all the time that his fundamental determination was to be the man that God wanted him to be. On the other hand we find an avoidance of the danger which I spoke of. With a pronounced character, with individual views, with determined prepossessions in favor of certain things, no man was more open to reason, would consider and balance things any more than he in the candid moments of conversation. In him there was a singular fidelity to both sides of opportunity, that of becoming individual and that of avoiding the dangers of individuality.

He has been of course a marked helper to the University and to this church. A week ago he was in our business meeting helping us by his wisdom. One of the last things he did was one of the most courteous and gracious acts of his whole life. No man among us loved the young people more than he did. He didn't grow old in that respect. This church has been singularly fortunate, as I have said before, in such men, men who trusted the young, men who rejoiced in seeing them come forward to every place of responsibility and duty; and he helped bring them forward by his energy and his encouragement. He was devoutly appreciative of our musical service which, as it is for us all a great help, so to him was an invaluable power over his heart. An absorbed, clear-headed listener to preaching, a tender soul in the devotions of praise and prayer, and a constant attendant and helper at prayer meeting. He was everywhere one whom we knew to be faithful to his God. So this personality, this unique individuality working into life the graces and virtues of God for himself, became an individuality open to others and finding

brotherhood and fellowship with them in the best sense. This individuality is a hard one for us to part with, but the church has been enriched by him in life and we shall all be more patient and true. These last few weeks, or few years in fact, you have noticed that his step has been growing more deliberate, his action has been calmer, and his entrance into all our life in every way more quiet. It was because the man knew that he walked somewhere near the limit of this earthly life, and in his prayers at home and elsewhere he showed the deepening life within him. One of the prayers which he offered not long ago in the pastor's study, where the deacons gather for prayer just before every Sunday morning's service, was spoken of as embodying his comprehensive request for the kingdom of God. We leave these remains for the dust, but we congratulate his spirit on rising to that sphere where all this individuality, this precious working out of life becomes doubly full of zest, where eternity will give him range and scope for all which he knew.

PRAYER.

Almighty and blessed Lord, Thou Giver of life, we rejoice that Thou hast made it possible for life to be so varied while being so one in essence. Thou hast not crowned it with any monotony but hast brought out of it every kind of beauty as the qualities which Thou hast prized are taken possession of by spirit after spirit and made such as Thou canst approve. We rejoice then in our personalities and in the call to be individuals and we pray to be guarded from all dangers arising from it. We ask Thee to make us free and hopeful and dutiful and hearty; we ask that Thou wilt lead us through life and bless us in every way in which we need to be strengthened for life.

We remember our brother with gratitude. We have known him these many years through his tasks, through his companionship, through his usefulness to church and institutions and city and country. He loved his country; he loved his city; he loved his church; he loved the world and he loved the home. So, O Lord, we find in him an example which shall help us as we think of all these things. We learn that unity of love may be found in a great variety of thoughts. We shall reach out into the world and still be ourselves as he was himself. Bless us, then, O Lord, and grant that as we go to lay aside these earthly remains we may rejoice in the wonderful promotion which has come to our brother, the entrance into that sphere in which his talents, his fidelity and virtues of all kinds shall find scope of utmost range. He has been gratified in the wish that when he went he might go swiftly. Bless the dear ones he leaves. Be in the home. Preserve them, O God, in all their life and help them take up life as he would like to have them take it up. Bless them, and grant, O Lord, that as duty comes day by day they may be strengthened more and more by the thought which deepened his character and ripened his faith as he grew older. Bless every one bound to him in any kind of way, any who have ties of blood who may not be here today, all associated in university work, in church work, in community work. Bless all and keep all in peace and bring us all unto his Master that his Master may be our Master in deed and in truth. Bless the organizations he loved, whose welfare he was so much interested in, coming from old comradeship in the army or from association of inheritance and descent. Bless them all and as they help to preserve manhood among us may they find that every soul is contributing something to the sterling qualities of humanity. We thank Thee for Thy help and pray for Thy grace through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

ABIDE WITH ME.

Abide with me: fast falls the eventide;
The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide!
When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, oh, abide with me!

Hold thou thy cross before my closing eyes;
Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies;
Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee;
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.

RESOLUTIONS OF THE FACULTIES AND STUDENTS OF HOWARD
UNIVERSITY.

HOWARD UNIVERSITY,

Washington, D. C., January 11, 1899.

WHEREAS, in the providence of God, our associate, Mr. James B. Johnson, for twenty-seven years Secretary and Treasurer of Howard University, has been suddenly removed by death, therefore,

Resolved, That we hereby express our high appreciation of the fidelity, integrity, and ability with which he has managed the financial interests of the University during this long period, and bear testimony to the great service he has been able to render to it, especially during the years of stress and anxiety which marked the first decade of its existence.

Resolved, That we tender to the family thus suddenly bereaved our warmest sympathy in the great loss sustained, which we count our own as well, and convey to them our earnest desire, individually and collectively, to render them any desired help or assistance.

In behalf of the Faculties and Students of Howard University,

J. E. RANKIN, *President*.

GEO. J. CUMMINGS.

JOHN L. EWELL.

GEO. WM. COOK.

F. W. FAIRFIELD.

RESOLUTIONS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF HOWARD
UNIVERSITY.

HOWARD UNIVERSITY,

Washington, D. C., January 19, 1899.

Resolved, That the trustees of this University cause to be recorded upon the minutes of this meeting, and transmitted to Mrs. Johnson, his widow, their serious affliction in the loss of their late Secretary and Treasurer, James Bowen Johnson. For twenty-seven years Mr. Johnson has made all the interests of this University his first care, serving it with a fidelity which is unusual and untiring, and an ability which provokes their gratitude and admiration. The freedom of the University from debt, the solidity of its business reputation, the safety and protection of its buildings, are largely owing to Mr. Johnson's watchfulness and sagacity.

Resolved, That they will always cherish his memory sacred, and be inspired as its guardians by the spirit of his life.

G. W. BALLOCH,
Acting Secretary.

RESOLUTIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF HOWARD
UNIVERSITY.

HOWARD UNIVERSITY,

Washington, D. C., January 19, 1899.

WHEREAS, God in His providence has taken away from his sphere of usefulness here, James Bowen Johnson, for more than a quarter of a century the Treasurer of Howard University ;

Resolved, That we, the Executive Committee of this institution, put on record our high appreciation of the great value of his services in conducting its finances for this long series of years, and the great loss to the institution from his sudden death.

Resolved, That in ability, exactness, punctuality, and fidelity to the institution in all its interests, in its relation to the public and to the United States Government, he was faithful to every duty, and a model official.

Resolved, That we extend to the widow and her fatherless children our deepest sympathy in their great bereavement and sorrow.

F. H. SMITH,
Acting Secretary.

REPORT OF A COMMITTEE OF THE SOLDIERS' UNION.

Hardly any member of the "Soldiers' Union" in the Congregational Church could be more missed than Comrade J. B. Johnson. It is very hard to realize that he has passed over the river.

He was such an enthusiastic member of our body, so interested in all the papers read, so ready to take any part to promote its interest. How can we spare him? The several papers he has read before us were so clear and intelligent a presentation of the conditions witnessed by him during the war that all were interested in them.

Comrade Johnson's life has been a uniform effort for the betterment of others. He possessed a youthful heart and genial disposition; and faithfulness to duty seemed to be his chief characteristic.

One of the charter members of this church, he gave it his best service, never wearying of its calls upon him. Always present at its meetings with his cheerful spirit and genial smile and hearty greeting for all strangers, as well as for old friends, the church will surely miss him. For a long time an office bearer, he gave his best effort to the welfare of the individual members and to the church as an organization.

Comrade Johnson's life is another proof of the solid character of the pilgrim ancestry who have given to this nation so much that is good. The elevation of the unfortunate classes to higher life, was a duty he sought to discharge with all fidelity.

He possessed a missionary spirit. He believed in the Congregational polity and rejoiced in the great influence this comparatively small body of Christians were exerting upon the nation and the world, especially in conducting institutions of learning and training to intelligent citizenship.

He died a soldier's death. He heard the order and obeyed the summons instantly. From duties well done in the lower sphere he has been called by the Heavenly Father, whose word to him was law, to the higher life. We tender his family our sincere sympathy. May his spirit of faithfulness to duty rest upon his comrades of the Soldiers' Union, and his example be followed by them.

For the Union,

A. S. PERHAM,
GEO. E. CORSON,
J. H. BRADFORD,
Committee.

LETTER FROM THE SOCIETY OF MAYFLOWER DESCENDANTS.

SOCIETY OF MAYFLOWER DESCENDANTS,

Washington, D. C., January 12, 1899.

MRS. JAMES BOWEN JOHNSON,

2460 Sixth Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.

MY DEAR MADAM:—

With deepest sorrow and regret the Society has learned of the death of Mr. Johnson. Many of us were with him but a few hours before his sudden attack, conversing with him, advising with and receiving his hearty, manly handshake at leaving. The shock of the news of our sudden bereavement was particularly intense. Many letters have come to me this morning, conveying through me to you the sincere and earnest sympathy of members who were so lately associated with your husband. Their genuine admiration for Mr. Johnson's fine manhood and genial, courtly manner, must indeed be a consolation to his loved ones left behind. Permit me, for myself, to join in their sympathy, and expressions of respect.

Very respectfully,

H. W. VAN DYKE,

Secretary.



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